

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

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DEPT POUCH TO: AMEMBASSIES BANGUI, KINSHASA, LAGOS, LIBREVILLE
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TAGS: PINT, CM

SUBJ: AHIDJO KEYNOTE SPEECH TO UNC PARTY CONGRESS

REF: YAOUNDE 485

1. INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY. PRESIDENT AHIDJO'S FIVE-HOUR KEY-
NOTE SPEECH TO CAMEROON NATIONAL UNION (UNC) PARTY CONGRESS
FEBRUARY 12 REVIEWED CAMEROON'S POLICY AND ACHIEVEMENTS SINCE
FIRST SUCH CONGRESS SIX YEARS AGO AND DEFINED FUNDAMENTAL POLI-
TICAL, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL POLICY DIRECTIONS FOR NEXT FIVE
YEARS. SPEECH WAS COUCHED IN USUAL AHIDJO MODERATE LANGUAGE
AND CONTAINED NO RPT NO DRAMATIC DEPARTURES. GREAT BULK OF
SPEECH WAS DEVOTED TO FACTUAL REVIEW OF PAST, WITH MUCH DETAIL
ON ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL MATTERS. THIS TELEGRAM COVERS MAJOR,
ESSENTIALLY POLITICAL POINTS, INCLUDING FOREIGN POLICY ELEMENTS.
MOST NOTABLE WAS: (A) STRESS ON CAMEROON'S VIGOROUS ADHERENCE
TO THIRD WORLD ASSERTIVE EFFORTS TO GAIN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL
JUSTICE VIS-A-VIS DEVELOPED COUNTRIES; (B) ACCENT AT HOME ON
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BETTER INTEGRATING CAMEROON'S YOUTH, INCLUDING INTELLECTUALS,

INTO COUNTRY'S POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS DESIGNED TO PRODUCE AUTHENTIC CAMEROONIAN NATION; AND (C) AGGRESSIVE, BUT REALLY DEFENSIVE STANCE ON CERTAIN SUBJECTS WHEREBY AHIDJO OBVIOUSLY REPLYING TO CRITICS OF HIS MODERATE POLICIES AND DOMINANT LEADERSHIP STYLE. END SUMMARY.

2. RECURRING MAJOR THEME WAS CAMEROON'S FERVENT SOLIDARITY WITH NON-ALIGNED AND THIRD WORLD NATIONS IN UNRELENTING JOINT EFFORT TO RIGHT IMBALANCES AND INJUSTICES OF PAST. THIS EFFORT DESIGNED TO BLEND IN WITH BROADER INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION WITH DEVELOPED COUNTRIES TO ENHANCE WELL-BEING AND SOLIDARITY OF ALL MANKIND; SPECIFICALLY NEEDED TO TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGY TO LDC'S, INSTALLATION OF MAJOR INTERNATIONAL PRODUCTIVE ENTERPRISES NEAR RAW MATERIALS AND SOURCES OF ENERGY. (COMMENT: DESPITE THEME OF "COOPERATION, NOT CONFRONTATION", OVERALL TONE WAS MORE THAT ANTAGONISTIC INTERESTS ESSENTIALLY PREVAIL AND CAMEROON STANDS FIRMLY IN RANKS OF THIRD WORLD COMBATANTS.)

3. AHIDJO DEFINED CONCENTRIC CIRCLES WHICH DESCRIBE CAMEROON'S INTERNATIONAL AFFINITIES: UDEAC, CONFERENCE OF EAST AND CENTRAL AFRICAN STATES, OAU, NON-ALIGNED GROUP, UN. PRAISE WAS UNDILUTED FOR UNEAC AS SUBREGIONAL ORGANIZATION AND OAU AS ALL-AFRICAN GROUPING, MUCH Milder AND NUANCED FOR CONFERENCE OF EAST AND CENTRAL AFRICAN STATES. SPOKE FAVORABLY ALSO OF LAKE CHAD BASIN COMMISSION AND REITERATED, WITHOUT RANCOR, NEGATIVE VIEW OF OCAM IN TODAY'S AFRICA. EXCEPTIONALLY STRONG PRAISE RENDERED ARAB-AFRICAN SOLIDARITY, WHILE ISRAEL HARSHLY CONDEMNED. (COMMENT: MIDDLE EASTERN PORTION WAS COUCHED IN TERMS WHICH SUGGEST DEFENSIVE RESPONSE TO WHAT WE KNOW TO BE MUCH CRITICISM VOICED BY CAMEROONIANS AGAINST "SELFISH" ARAB ACTIONS.) AHIDJO ALSO DEFENSIVELY DENIED THAT CAMEROON'S DIPLOMACY HAD "TURNED LEFT" IN RECENT YEARS.

4. DEFINING ROLE OF PARTY VIS-A-VIS GOVERNMENT, AHIDJO DESCRIBED PARTY AS INCARNATION OF SOVEREIGN PEOPLE, CRUCIBLE OF NATIONAL UNITY AND CONSCIOUSNESS, WITH DECISIVE ROLE IN POLITICAL SYSTEM EVEN THOUGH GOVERNMENTAL INSTITUTIONS DERIVE THEIR LEGITIMACY INDEPENDANTLY OF PARTY FROM COUNTRY'S CONSTITUTION. PARTY, HE SAID, SHAPES IDEOLOGY OF STATE AND ACTION OF GOVERNMENT, WHILE STATE IS MECHANISM FOR PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTING PROGRAMS OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ACTION. RE STATE, HE STRONGLY ESPOUSED NECESSITY OF PRESIDENTIAL REGIME AND STRONG EXECUTIVE. AT SAME TIME, HE CHARACTERIZED CAMEROON'S SYSTEM AS TRUE DEMOCRACY AND DIALOGUE, AND TALKED OF HIS EFFORTS AT DECENTRALIZING POWER THROUGH BROAD DELEGATION TO PROVINCIAL GOVERNORS AND CABINET MINISTERS. (COMMENT: HERE TOO, AHIDJO WAS AGGRESSIVELY DEFENSIVE.)

5. AHIDJO ALSO FORCEFULLY DESCRIBED HIS OBJECTIVE OF MAKING CAM-

EROON MASTER OF OWN DESTINY BY SYSTEMATIC AND CONSCIOUS ACTION BRINGING STEADY CHANGE AND PROGRESS AND NOT ABRUPTLY DESTROYING EVERYTHING. DEFENDED THIS POLICY AS "REALISTIC REVOLUTIONARY REFORMISM" AGAINST CHARGES BY "CAMEROONIAN AND FOREIGN DETRACTORS" WHO ACCUSE HIM OF "CONSERVATISM."

6. AHIDJO COINED WHAT IS OBVIOUSLY DESTINED TO BECOME NEW SLOGAN: "DEVELOPEMENT AUTO-CENTRE" (SELF-RELIANT DEVELOPMENT), MEANING DEVELOPMENT BY AND FOR THE PEOPLE, I.E., COUNTRY'S OWN EFFORTS TO MAKE CAMEROON "AUTHENTIC NATION" THROUGH ITS THREE-FOLD REVOLUTION ENCOMPASSING POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, AND CULTURAL RENOVATION. IN THIS CONTEXT, AHIDJO FORECAST CONTINUITY OF PAST FUNDAMENTAL OPTIONS COUPLED WITH IMAGINATIVE FUTURE MEASURES WHICH CONCERN ESPECIALLY STATE, ECONOMY, YOUTH, AND PARTY.

(A) RE STATE, CALL WAS FOR TRANSFORMATION INTO "ADMINISTRATION OF DEVELOPMENT", MOVING AWAY FROM PRESENT "OVERLY CLASSIC" STRUCTURE INTO LESS COSTLY ONE, WITH OFFICIALS WORKING MORE QUICKLY AND EFFECTIVELY AND DISPLAYING GREATER RESPONSIBILITY. (NO RPT NO CLARIFYING DETAILS GIVEN.) ALSO, ARMY NOT ONLY TO ENLARGE ITS PRESENT PARTICIPATION IN ROAD BUILDING ACTIVITIES, BUT ALSO TO BEGIN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION AND STOCKRAISING TO HELP FEED SELF, AND RECEIVE APPROPRIATE TECHNICAL TRAINING TO PERMIT ITS MEMBERS TO ENGAGE IN OTHER NATIONAL ACTIVITIES BOTH DURING AND AFTER THEIR PERIOD OF MILITARY SERVICE.

(B) RE ECONOMY, AHIDJO RESTRESSED AGRICULTURE AND "GREEN REVOLUTION" AS BASIS FOR CAMEROON'S DEVELOPMENT AND REAFFIRMED POLICY OF PLANNED LIBERALISM, I.E., ENCOURAGING PRIVATE INVESTMENT AND INITIATIVE IN FRAMEWORK OF PLAN DEVISED BY STATE TO ASSURE RAPID AND BALANCED GROWTH, AND SOCIAL JUSTICE FOR CITIZENS.

(C) RE YOUTH, CONSIDERABLE STRESS WAS LAID ON BRINGING YOUTH LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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INTO KEY ROLE IN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT PROCESS BY ORGANIZING THEM, GIVING APPROPRIATE IDEOLOGICAL TRAINING, AND GETTING THEM POLITICALLY ENGAGED THROUGH BETTER DEVELOPING YOUTH WING (JUNC) OF PARTY. AHIDJO SPECIFICALLY CALLED FOR CREATION SOON OF "NATIONAL CONFERENCE" OF JUNC, I.E., NATIONAL-LEVEL GOVERNING BODY AS CALLED FOR BY PARTY'S EXTRAORDINARY CONGRESS OF JUNE-1972. JUNC PRESENTLY ORGANIZED ONLY UP TO SECTION (DEPARTMENT) LEVEL AND LACKS NATIONAL BODY. MUCH ALSO MADE OF INTEGRATING UNIVERSITY STUDENTS AND TEACHERS INTO NATIONAL ACTIVITIES IN FRAMEWORK OF PARTY TO ASSURE SUCCESS OF CULTURAL RENOVATION.

(D) RE UNC ITSELF, AHIDJO CALLED FOR ADAPTING PARTY ORGANIZATIONS AND METHODS TO MAKE IT MORE RELEVANT TO DEVELOPMENT. MENTIONED ESPECIALLY NEED TO RECONVERT LOWER-LEVEL PARTY ORGANS INTO

"ACTION UNITS" FOR PRODUCTION (BUT NOT "PRODUCTION ENTERPRISES")
BY MOBILIZING MILITANTS IN LIAISON WITH GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION.
NO RPT NO FURTHER DETAIL GIVEN AND NOT RPT NOT CLEAR WHAT INTENDED.
MOORE

NOTE BY OC/T: POUCHED ABOVE ADDRESSEES

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